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disposal, and in 1774 Louis XVI presented the set of four, together with four others of different design, to the aged Cardinal Charles Antoine de La Roche-Aymon, who had been intimately associated with the king in many of the important events of his career. As Archbishop of Rheims and Grand Aumonier of France, the Cardinal had baptized and confirmed Louis, had administered to him his first communion, married him, and finally crowned him the year before. The gifts were hung in the Archiepiscopal palace and remained there until the sale of the Cardinal's effects after his death in 1777. In 1883 they were brought to London and again placed on the market, and by this time the fifth piece from Neilson's atelier, originally the property of the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, had been added to them. So far as is known, there are no other pieces of the Don Quixote series in America, nor any Gobelins of a like quality, and it is very improbable that such can again be obtained, since almost all of the tapestries of this series form part of Government collections, those of the State in France and of the crown in Italy and Germany.

D. F.

#### AN ASSYRIAN SWORD



ANTELOPE  
DETAIL FROM THE  
ASSYRIAN SWORD

A GIFT received lately from Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, is an Assyrian sword of rare interest. It is, in fact, the only specimen of its kind, the primitive bronze *Sa-pa-ra*, of which the writer has any record, although its type is well known in Assyrian monuments, notably cylinders, on which the god Maruduk is shown fighting with a dragon. The present sword is well known to archæologists and was long exhi-

bited in the Assyrian gallery of the British Museum. It has several times been figured, as in Burton's *Book of the Sword*, p. 208, or in the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. IV. p. 347. It was obtained about 1875 by an English explorer, Colonel Hanbury, at Nardin, where it had been in the possession of Arabs. Nothing is known of its earlier history.

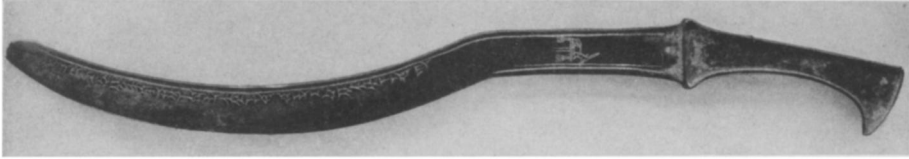
Among bronze swords it merits high rank in beauty of workmanship; the blade is slender, single-edged, and its outline is gracefully rounded down (forward) from the produced straight tang; its surface is delicately curved from back to edge. In form and in size—it is twenty inches long—the sword suggests the bolo of the Malayan peoples, a case of evolutionary convergence, doubtless, but a curiously complete one, even to the balance of the blade and the form of the handle. On the other hand, its similarity to the Phœnician short sword is less apt to prove a case of parallelism, especially since the Phœnician form is the more highly specialized, a condition which could have been predicted from the time relations of the kindred peoples, Assyrian and Phœnician. It was excellently planned as a chopping sword, and could have been used formidably with a short forearm stroke. Its workmanship is excellent, as in the quality of the surfaces, in the grooving, in the precise and graduated margins of the handle, in the regularly and boldly executed cuneiform characters, above all, in the grace of design of the little incised ornaments (resting antelopes) which appear on the sides of the blade.

The characters have been read and each of the three inscriptions is the same; the first, on the left side of the blade, the second, on the right side of the base of the blade, and the third, on the back of the blade, read: "The Palace of Vul-niari, King of Nations, son of Budil, King of Assyria, son of Belnirai, King of Assyria." The sword is thus important as an historical document, giving as it does the names and relationships of three Assyrian rulers who reigned during the fourteenth century B. C. in the capital of Assur (Kelch Sher-gat), a region from which it was obtained.

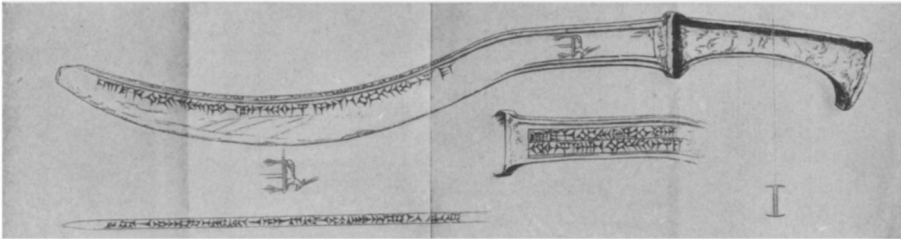
# BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The sword was believed by Mr. Boscawen, who first called attention to it, to be a temple piece, and "probably placed in the hands of a statue, perhaps one of the god Maruduk." But we are convinced that the sword was not a mere

importance to its actual value in battle. Its hilt originally contained on either side a plate of some material, possibly hard wood, metal, or ivory, which formed the sides of the grip, these held in place by inbent margins of the metal. There is



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decorative piece, for its accurate balance, its rounded surfaces and corners, and its careful finish all speak in favor of its having been used, and by one to whom the artistic finish of the arm was second in

no evidence of the "richly jeweled hilt" of which Mr. Boscawen writes — but without this the sword is easily an object of highest rank.

B. D.

